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Northey
The
Arabian Mission

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Quarterly Letters from the Field



Number Thirty-eight, April to June, 1901

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Busrah

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QUARTERLY LETTERS FROM THE ARABIAN MISSION

April-June, 1901.

THE REV. HARRY J. WIERSUM.

By cablegram from Arabia on August 3d, we learned of the death of Rev. Harry J. Wiersum. Only three days previously we had received a letter from him saying of the missionaries at Busrah, "we are all well." And a few days earlier still we had a letter full of hope and energy telling of the arrangements for passing his final language examination and adding that on August 1st we might expect the cablegram, "Passed," which would assure us of his success. The day came and soon after a cablegram telling us that our brother had indeed passed, but it was a passing to the end of all his earthly work, for the Master had called him to a work that is higher.

Mr. Wiersum was a child of the Reformed Church in the West. Largely under the influence of a pious mother—so he told us—he gave his heart to the Saviour in his childhood. He began to take a decided stand for Christ while a student at Hope College, and became a member of the First Church, Englewood, Chicago. Graduated in 1896, at the age of 22, he pursued his theological studies at Princeton Seminary, and was ordained to the gospel ministry by the Classis of Iowa in July, 1899. Already in the autumn of 1898 he had made application for appointment as a missionary, ready to go to any field where it should be thought best to send him. His appointment followed in March, 1899, and he spent several months among the churches speaking in the interests of the Arabian Mission, and sailed from New York on his way to Arabia in the following September.

We looked for a life of marked usefulness because of what the man revealed of himself in his letters and because of the testimony of his comrades to his winning ways, his earnest zeal and fidelity, but on the threshold of his work his work ends. Three times in as many years the Lord has called away one of our young and promising workers : Peter Zwemer, Stone and Wiersum. We count it a great loss, but they do not. Men count not their lives dear unto them when they go thither to serve Christ. By this striking providence the Master is calling the attention of the Church to the field, its dangers, its difficulties and its needs. He is calling other men to go and calling the Church to be ready to send them. For Christ and Arabia these men are willing to die. Are we willing to live for them.

SEC.

ACTION OF THE CLASSIS OF IOWA.

Brother Wiersum had been ordained to the mission work in Arabia by the Classis of Iowa and was there supported by members of its churches; and in view of his lamented death, we desire as a Committee of Classis to express and to record upon our minutes the following :

1. We had learned to esteem and love our brother as a faithful friend to us, a loving follower and servant of our Lord Jesus Christ and a missionary of much promise for the difficult field in Arabia. He had proven to us that his expressed desire, not to allow anything however precious to keep him from Gospel work in Arabia, had become a controlling principle of his life.

2. Although Brother Wiersum was the second missionary of our Arabian Syndicate—Rev. Peter Zwemer being the first—who after long and expensive preparation was permitted to labor only for a very short period, yet we do not consider this disappointing Providence as a call to abandon our work or to materially change our methods, but we do believe that we are called : (a) to realize more fully that we walk by faith and not by sight ; (b) that we humble ourselves before God and ask from Him warmer hearts, purer motives and a more humble sense of our dependence, seeing we are so faulty and can accomplish nothing unless the Lord will graciously use us. (c) In view of the fact that humanly speaking the death of our brother might have been prevented if a competent physician had been on the field, we declare it to be our

duty and purpose to so support our Arabian Mission that a physician can be stationed at every prominent point that we occupy in that very dangerous climate.

3. We humbly pray the Lord that He will speedily point out to us a devoted and fully qualified man to assume the work that has been interrupted, and we renew our promise and endeavor more heartily and humbly to engage in a work which needs more faith and prayer and the success of which we acknowledge to depend entirely upon the Lord's acceptance.

4. We desire to express our deep sympathy with the sorrowing father and relatives of the deceased, and ask for them of God the comfort and support which they so greatly need and He alone can give.

PETER LEPELTAK,

HENRY DE JONGE,

Comm. for Classis of Ia.

ALTON, ILL., August 15, 1901.

BUSRAH.

A TOUR THROUGH TURKISH ARABIA.

REV. HARRY J. WIERSUM.

On one of the two large English river boats which steam up and down the Tigris River, I took my passage. I left the "Mejidiah" at Kut el Amara where the tour properly began. I should like to write about the many interesting sights to be seen on the shores of the Tigris, especially interesting to the Bible student, of the place called Ozeir, supposed to be the site of the prophet Ezra's remains; of the flocks of sheep here and there to be seen following a shepherdess, reminding one of Rebekah; of the groups of the black tents of Kedar, so imposing in appearance, but space permits only a few remarks concerning the journey and some of its experiences.

Up the Tigris.

On reaching Kut el Amara we came in contact for the first time with the Turkish officials; for, since everything must pass through the Custom House, we were obliged to submit the books to their examining eyes. The result was that nine scriptures were retained. The object of the official

evidently was to obtain bakshish, but hoping these books might be read either by the official himself, or by his friends, I allowed him to keep them. Thereupon we went to the inn where we took up our quarters. No sooner had the few boxes arrived, which we took with us, than the visitors began to come in. A foreigner was in town, and the people must know what my business was. So, Micha, the colporteur, opened the box of books and showed them a gospel. Gradually becoming bolder—for at first the Arab is rather shy of a European—the gospels were read by those able to read. This opened the way for objections which were made and answered. Some hours were thus pleasantly spent, the Arabs squatting on the floor, while I sat on a box. We were frequently interrupted by the Turkish officials who came to see whether our passports would guarantee a sojourn in their land. With patience we endured this continual scrutiny for we felt conscious that they came only to find some pretext to drive us out.

The country between Kut el Amara on the Tigris and Nasariyeh on the Euphrates, is connected by a stream of water, navigable in the flood season, called the Shat el Hai. It was on this so-called river that the tour was made. After the usual delays—for an Arab is never on time—we left Kut el Amara in a small open boat called “Bellum”; while on the shore sat scores of men women and children to see us off. The first town we arrived at is called Hai, where we put up at the inn. In the early morning I

An Arab Fight. was awakened by yells and shouts which came from below, and on looking out of the window I saw a sight which chilled me—an Oriental fight. I was reminded of Paul, how the crowd in their mad cry for his blood tossed him to and fro, having been scarcely liberated by the guard. Naturally, little could be done in a town so excited; we ventured out but Micha received no pleasant treatment. The books were torn from his hands and scattered in the street, but he quietly picked them up one by one, and again asked them if they did not wish to buy a gospel. In the afternoon a few Arabs visited us at the inn. However little could be accomplished in this place, and for this reason we left on the next day for the next town called Kala. This being but a small town I decided to remain only a short time. We put up in the house of Abdallah, a Chaldean Christian. We had a pleasant conversation about religious matters, and though

there were but three of us I doubt not that God was in our midst as we held our prayer meeting. Abdallah stands alone in this Moslem town. God grant that His light may shine and in a measure dispel the black darkness of this Moslem night. After a tender farewell we left Kala and Abdallah to pursue our journey on to Shattra which we reached the next day.

In passing I may mention a few items concerning this country. The land is wholly given up to raising grain and pasturing flocks. The shepherd boys amuse themselves by playing on some musical instrument, no doubt as David used to do. At night the air is rent by the awful howl of jackals, which came very near to us as we tied up to the shore. The flocks are brought twice a day to the river's edge to drink. While passing I saw some lambs which were fastened in the mud so that they could not get out. How pitifully they cried, and how quickly the little shepherd lads ran to their rescue. I thought of the many little Arab boys and girls who knew not of the Saviour. Who can reach these little children? There is but one answer, namely, the lady missionaries. The Arab mother's hopes and joys are bound up in their boys, and they tenderly watch over them till they have grown up. Therefore, when the single lady missionaries come for whom we have prayed well nigh two years, women will be reached together with their children.

We arrived at Shattra long after the sun had set, and as usual we found a lodging place at the inn. This is a town of considerable size, so that we remained four days. We soon made friends with whom we had pleasant conversations either in my room at the inn or in the coffee shop. Micha patiently and faithfully exposed his books for sale, which again as at Hai were thrown in the air. But with true Oriental patience he gathered them up. When he had gathered the books together, the tide turned in his favor, for an Arab more bold than his fellows took

As Sheep without a Shepherd. a gospel and began to read it. His example was followed by the others so that once more Micha was deprived of his books, but this time they received gentler treatment. Among these men was one who had not the courage to buy a gospel openly; so, Nicodemus-like, he came to my room late at night. After reading and talking for some time he took

Selling Gospels.

two gospels with him. The next day was Sunday when no books were sold. As many as two score came to buy a gospel, but they were deferred till the morrow. The next day they came in great numbers. The missionary who yearns for these Arabs that they may come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ—how his heart leaps with joy as he sees a score of Arabs about him all drinking in the Words of Life. There they sat, everyone squatted on the floor with his back to the wall, their sandals in a heap in the doorway, each one reading aloud and all at the same time. Many Turkish officials and soldiers also came, some of whom left with a gospel concealed in their garments so that they might not be detected by the Mullah. While in the coffee shop an Arab addressed me in this wise: "Why have you come here with your books? We don't want them. But your persistent effort is like a rope which wears out even the well-stone." Significant remark this, which also shows that the Moslem heart is no easy conquest. Would we might have remained a longer time at Shattrah, but many hundred miles still lay before us and we took our departure, though unwillingly, setting our faces toward Nasariyeh. En route a second shower of rain overtook us—for it was the month of March—but this time we found shelter in a wayside Arab hut. At night we slept in the "Bellum," which had scant space for six men to sleep

*From Nasariyeh
to Busrah.*

in. This number included the three boatmen, Micha, the colporteur, Abd Ali, my servant, and myself. After a hot journey we arrived in safety at Nasariyeh. Unfortunately this proved to be the end of the active work of this tour, for owing to the lack for a fortnight of proper food and drink, two painful boils broke out on my feet, together with a fever, so that I was bound to my cot. However, we obtained the desired information which it was our object to obtain relative to future operations in Nejd, so that even in Nasariyeh we did not run in vain. We left Nasariyeh rather hastily because of my ill-health, and after five days reached Busrah.

This brief account will, I trust, convey a fair idea of this tour which consumed three weeks and covered nigh on 1,000 miles. The entire journey was made by water. And now again more than 60 portions of God's Word are in the hands of these Arabs, which, God grant, may give these benighted souls a hunger and a thirst after righteousness which Jesus Christ alone can satisfy.

BAHREIN.

REV. S. M. ZWEMER, D.D.

It is not often that missionaries are offered a free passage on steamers in the Persian Gulf, but on April 20th, we accepted the invitation of the captain of the Belgian yacht "Selika" to go along on a cruise in the Gulf. The yacht carried a Belgian-French scientific expedition, and as nearly all of the officers and all of the crew spoke Antwerp Dutch their short stay at Bahrein was a mutual pleasure.

*Cruise in a
Belgian Yacht.*

Elias and I put our boxes of books and outfit for a tour across country on board and hoped they would land us somewhere on the coast of Oman. We sailed across to Katif first, and although *we* had no difficulty with the Turks, they refused to allow the expedition to go about on shore to photograph and collect insects! So our stay was short and the yacht steamed across to Bushire. From there we called at the island of Kais, a short distance north of Lingah. This island, like nearly all others in the Gulf, has an Arab population although so near the coast of

*The Island of
Kais.*

Persia. It is a very ancient settlement and has old ruins of its former importance. When Armuz was the Paris of the East, the island of Kais, with its neighboring city of Siraf, was like Marseilles. Now the island has only three villages, Sefil, Hariri and Masha. In the latter place we spent a couple of hours talking with Sheikh Ahmed, the ruler. We visited the bazaar, sold seventeen portions of Scripture and left some copies of Sir William Muir's tract in Arabic: "Moslems Invited to Read the Bible."

At Lingah, we were right in the midst of the Moharrem spectacles—days of fanatic mourning for Ali and his sons on the part of every Shiah Moslem. The bazaars were closed, but in the coffee shops we had opportunity to teach and to preach. This large port more and more seems to us an open door; there are Moslem inquirers and there seems a spirit of toleration. Shall this gateway to southern Persia remain unentered?

Lingah.

At Lingah we had a farewell dinner with our Belgian friends and tried our best to thank them

for their hospitality and kindness and interest in our work. Even on board the yacht we left a few grains of seed ; they were thankful to add a French and a Dutch Bible to their library and some other books. As the yacht did not go to Abu Thabi as we expected, nothing was left but to engage a native sailboat. Everything favored us. At 8 a. m., we set sail, on May 1st, and a good wind carried us before it one hundred and sixty miles in a day and a half. This brought us to Abu Thabi on the evening of May 2d.

Those of you who have read our account in the *Christian Intelligencer* of the visit to Abu Thabi in February, will remember our disappointment at that time because the chief of that part of

*Once More
in Oman.*

Oman refused to let us go inland unless we had letters of introduction from the British Consul.

Now this lack was supplied. Sheikh Zeid remembered our former visit with apparent pleasure. Some came for medicine and others for books. One Moslem shop-keeper bought over two dozen to retail at a profit. It is not our usual

*Across to
Bereimy.*

custom to sell this way, wholesale, but we know this man and he can be trusted. Hospitality was liberal and we soon secured camels to take us

across the desert to Bereimy for a sum that seemed liberal in the eyes of the covetous Bedouin who was to be our guide.

The town of Abu Thabi is situated on a sort of island formed by the back-water of its harbor, which turns in a few miles beyond the town and forms a channel about two hundred yards wide and even at low water five feet deep. Right in the midst of this natural barrier stands the fort of Sheikh Zeid. Even without its challenge ordinary camels with their riders have a close escape from drowning every time they cross. Our beasts were in up to the breast and had there been a slip or a stumble we should have come to grief.

For three hours the road was as level as a table and equally barren. Then we passed some out-cropping rocks called Hisu Iblis, "The Devil's Castle." All that day and the next we rode through sandy deserts with scarcely any vegetation, resting at noon under the shade of a blanket roped over our boxes. It was pretty hot and the water in the skins had taken on a foreign taste

after its long and jerky ride. We ate dates and made soup from condensed vegetables ; the Bedouins of our party caught lizards and made a boiled mess of them with rice. They were displeased that we did not share their meal. The only settlement we passed was Nachshila, a half-ruined village with a few date trees. On Sunday, May 5th, we arrived at the encampment of the Muzari Arabs and rested. It was a busy day nevertheless and the black tent was very hot. All day we feasted on fresh milk, and at night they killed a fat kid and made their cakes, baked on hot ashes. Water was plentiful although slightly brackish. We talked with the men, treated over a dozen sick folks, gave away two or three Gospels to the few who were able to read and finally I wrote out A B C cards for some bright lads who professed a desire to learn to read Arabic.

*Pitiful State of
the Nomads.*

We had a glimpse on this journey of the nomad life, as well as a little experience of it. What poor ignorant half-starved creatures the nomads are ! With more natural graces and less fanaticism than the Arabs of the coast, it would seem that they are not so far from the Kingdom.

We left our Bedouin friends at nine o'clock in the evening and rode until past midnight, always due east. It was very cold at night in the desert even at this time of the year. The following day we came across a poor nomad lass, lost herself in seeking for a strayed camel. Our guide gave her water and dates and showed her the way. It is a wide wilderness of sand here for miles and miles in every direction ; not level but in wierd folds and billows a hundred feet high that change with every blast.

On Tuesday we reached the oasis of Bereimy, a wide stretch of fertile palm-country under the shadow of the picturesque Jebel Hafid, the first spur of the Okdat range. Bereimy consists of seven villages, joined by streams of fresh water and palm-plantations with high mango trees interspersed to lend variety to the view. On the outskirts of these villages is a plain verdant with grass and shrubs, where vast herds of sheep and camels tell of Arab wealth. The people are nearly all Wahabi Moslems, although they do not observe all the strictness of their sect.

A Fertile Oasis.

Beyond Bereimy the mountain road passes numerous and populous villages to Obri and Dank ; thence over the Jebel Achdar to Muscat. Because our stock of Scriptures was nearly exhausted, we chose the shorter road through Wady el Jazi direct to Sohar, hoping to get a boat there for Muscat. The following are the villages between Bereimy and Sohar : Muhashemi, El Hail, Er Rabi, Howelli, Wasit, Khan, Es Soheilah, Sohban, El Muleina, 'Auhi and El Feli. The Arab tribes here are : Kenood, Majabil, Showamis and Bni Haith ; perpetually at feud with each other. Everybody gets up armed and goes to bed with a rifle by his side. The people cultivate the soil and raise all sorts of small crops by careful irrigation. They belong mostly to the Abadhi sect ; one of the heretical Moslem sects that grew on the soil of Persian speculation, and is less rigid in its orthodoxy and more lax in its practice than the Wahabis.

Wasit.

At Wasit we rested the noon-tide. I extracted five teeth and doctored a dozen other patients. Elias as usual surpassed that record by the number of Scriptures sold. At Khan we spent the evening in a wayside mosque, talking, preaching, eating, sleeping, with half the village astir around us. The road we followed, in long camel marches by night and day was through Wady El Jazi up to Sohar. There is no room in our letter to give one-half of our interesting experiences, or to tell our adventures with camel-men and villagers. At 'Auhi we had a large audience under a mango tree, and here our last Arabic Gospels found purchasers.

*Along the Coast
on Camels.*

From Sohar we did *not* go to Muscat by sea ; there was no wind. Instead we encouraged each other to stick to our rough camel-saddles four days more. Except the eighteen miles between Sohar and Soham, we rode the entire distance, one hundred and fifty odd miles, on the (hard) ship of the desert. At Birka we stopped to see the place where George E. Stone died. At Muscat we learned from Mr. Cantine that we must have passed his colporter on the road somewhere, as he was making the tour of the Batinah. And so the zigzag lines of our pioneer journeys in Eastern Arabia are beginning to meet and to cross. With more missionaries and helpers specially qualified and set apart for touring, all of Oman could soon be visited with the gospel message. Instead of once a

year these villages should be visited once a month. And yet there remains much land to be possessed.

BY REV. J. E. MOERDYK.

THE BIBLE SHOP.

During five or six weeks in April and May while Dr. Zwemer, with his colporter, was absent on a tour in Oman, the Arabic teacher and myself spent two hours daily in the Bible Shop. This was one way of keeping the shop open before the people, although from a business standpoint two or three hours was hardly sufficient. I do not purpose to write in full about my experiences but desire to refer to four men who came to us on different days.

One of the first who came to the shop was a native shop-keeper in a street near by. He entered assuming a rather overbearing manner, acting as if he owned the premises. At home I think we should have marked him as conceited. After looking about the place, adjusting the motto upon the wall and the Arabic calendar and exchanging a few remarks with the teacher, he turned to me and asked me if I knew English. His next question was, "Can you read and write English?" He then brought paper and pen and asked me to write out the alphabet with the corresponding Arabic letters underneath. Then he repeated them after me several times in succession. Two days after this I met the man in the bazaar and asked him about his success with the English letters. He answered that he had forgotten all; and from the sneer upon his face, the muttering tone and repulsive gestures with his hands, I knew that some one had disgusted him.

Several days after this a young Arab entered and asked to see a book of Arabic poems. The book was given to him and he was invited to be seated and read. I noticed that the man was near-sighted. I decided to risk my meager vocabulary and tell him about his eyes. I told him that my eyes were very much like his, but that I corrected my sight by using spectacles. I explained that he could see fairly well without spectacles if he brought the book close up to his eyes, and that he had no difficulty in distin-

guishing objects near by, but that he could not see things in the distance. I then produced the spectacles and asked him to try them. Of course, he did not know how to use them, so I adjusted them for him. He tried to read and went to the door to have a look out of doors; he tried again without the spectacles, but returned them to me saying that he could see equally well without them. Well, perhaps the lenses did not fit his eyes, for he may have had other difficulties.

A Mullah, or religious teacher in Islam, once entered to have a short talk with us. I do not know what was his purpose when he came but the conversation soon narrowed down to the subject of sin. The Mullah maintained that sin was from God and therefore man was in a very large measure excusable for his wicked deeds. He reasoned: 'Did not God create you and me? Did He not give us this evil nature which makes man sin? Then how can we help ourselves?' And this is one of the wicked falsehoods which this "teacher in Islam" pours into his docile hearers.

A man dressed in the uniform of a Turkish soldier came to us asking where he could find the "tall doctor" whom he had seen here some months ago. We answered that he was absent on a journey. He then told us his story. About five or six months ago he had met Mr. Zwemer, who had spoken to him about the gospel and had given him a book. He had taken the book with him to the barracks and had read it with much interest. In Bagdad his brother had caught him reading in this forbidden volume and had reported the matter. The soldier was cast in prison where he remained for some time. But he had escaped and was fleeing to Bombay where he would be safe. He was fleeing from port to port as fast as he could find boats to take him. So great was his fear that he dared not tarry in Bahrein and departed to Lingah the next day. Of course we possessed no means of verifying his story but he appeared honest. He confessed that he was no Christian. He had received first impressions while reading the gospel and was eager to reach Bombay where he would apply for further instruction in the Word.

These men did not visit the Bible Shop in the order mentioned. I have changed the order for a purpose. Many of our readers know something about the condition of the people to which your missionaries are sent. I knew from the books, but not until I

came hither did I appreciate what it meant. To read that this people is ignorant is indefinite until you see and hear them—until the same question which every one asks of his neighbor is put to you, "Can you read?" To read that they are bigoted and fanatical is indefinite until you brush up against the men who make them thus. When the missionary tells them the story he finds that they do not understand and he must help them. Very often he learns that either they will not see or that he has used the wrong method in explanation. Or perhaps at a second meeting he finds that some Mullah has been in his tracks using nice falsehoods and dreaded threats; and the Arab refuses to listen at all. Should any Muslim become interested and desire further instruction he must come in secret or expect persecution. The persecution may not prove so severe as we imagine, but we know that the worst may be expected.

THE MEDICAL WORK.

A letter or report from Bahrein would be incomplete if it did not contain some information about the medical work. And since the physician in charge does not write this quarter, I shall write briefly about what I saw and heard one day when I visited the dispensary.

Directly after morning prayers in the chapel I went out among the men already gathered before the door of the dispensary while others were seen coming from the market. Here were Arabs, Persians, Africans, Jews and Hindus. Here were the very poor in scanty garments and the servants of the rich. I saw the blind seated here and the blind leading the blind coming yonder. I saw the lame, the maimed and the emaciated. All these were patiently waiting to see the doctor. Before the routine work of the doctor was begun, Mr. Zwemer took a seat among the patients and opened the "Holy Book" to read to them. The passage for the morning was the description of heaven as recorded in Revelation, Chapter 21st. Both during the reading of the Word and during the explanation which followed, the listeners remained quiet and attentive. Frequently some one would say, "Praise the Lord," and "Thank God;" but I noticed that when the preacher dwelt on the expression, "the Lamb," telling them about Christ the Son of

God, one man insisted on calling out, "prophet of God," for he would not own Him as Son of God. During the prayer which followed every person was requested to stand, and every one arose and remained quiet. After this service the patients filed in to speak with the doctor who gave them the needed medicines and treatment each required. Quite a few of these took particular pains to show their gratitude, while others came and went without a word of gratitude. I went out again and found three Jews reading a Hebrew Testament. They were reading from the sixth chapter of Matthew. I could not appreciate their discussion but learned enough to know that they were interested. The doctor told me that during the past quarter he had given something like 3,840 treatments. From Mrs. Thoms, M.D., I learned that about 900 treatments had been given to women. Truly, here has been an opportunity to preach the Gospel. Many of these have thus heard the Message repeatedly, and some have brought friends and relatives who have listened to the same message.

A SUMMER BIBLE SCHOOL.

During the past two weeks Bahrein has entertained delegates to the Summer Bible School. This has been the first session of a proposed annual gathering for Bible study, and we think it has proved a success. Six of the eight native assistants belonging to the mission came to attend the school. Mr. Cantine and Mr. Zwemer were the instructors. Mr. Cantine delivered ten lectures on "Prayer," with Scripture references from the four Gospels. Mr. Zwemer delivered twelve lectures on the "Apostles Creed," with proof-texts taken from Matthew's Gospel. A paper from Dr. Thoms on "Health and Hygiene" was read at one of the sessions. A lecture on "Islam" by Dr. Zwemer, and Mr. Cantine's lecture on "Bible Lands," illustrated by lantern pictures, completed the work of the school. Ample opportunity for full discussion was given at each lecture. The men were very punctual in attending the sessions of the school, and several have expressed themselves as thankful for the instruction received and the good obtained. The missionaries have come in closer touch with the men and have learned to know them better. This has also proved a good opportunity for hearing from the different stations, and for comparing notes on methods of work in Bible distribution.

MUSCAT.

REV. JAMES CANTINE.

The last quarterly letters contained nothing from Muscat, and this will be but a brief sketch of the station work for the past half-year, though actually there is only four months of it, as I did not get back from mission meeting until February, and also was away during June attending our summer Bible school at Bahrein.

As regards numbers of workers Muscat is the smallest of our stations, and probably will not claim its share of the mission gatherings for some time to come; but when the changes in the mission-house now under way are completed, we at any rate shall be able to exercise some hospitality and to share with our fellow missionaries those few weeks in the late summer when we have the preference in the matter of temperature.

*The New
Colporter.*

Outside of the usual routine of the resident missionary our work has been mostly done by the new colporter, Said Muscor; the old one, Yusuf, who had been with us for five years finally leaving for service with the English Consul. Said is from the American Mission at Mardin, Turkey, and is as far from his home in point of time as we are from ours. While we regret the necessity for sending so far for our assistants, yet we have found Christian character and general dependableness seem to increase with the latitude, and we never, as I now recall, have been so well satisfied with helpers from the Christian communities nearer to us. This has been Said's first experience at Bible work, and he has done excellently well as to number of sales, and in what is more important still his manner of life and conversation. Unfortunately he has spent already a month in the Government hospital with some stomach trouble and has been able to make but one long tour. This was our old itinerary—up the coast by boat and returning from town to town by donkeys. He was away four weeks, visited over twenty-five places and sold one hundred and eighty portions.

His experiences were varied:—At one town he was threatened with sword and knife and his books torn up before his face, and this because of the unwise words of a former colporter, but by patience he was enabled to exact payment for the books destroyed

and to sell some three dozen others. At another village he was refused a drop of water, and for thirty-six hours until he could pass on was compelled to endure as best he could. At still another, a little off the regular route, he was the first Christian they ever had seen, and had the joy of finally winning for himself and for his message a way into their homes and hearts.

A word should be said here about the Freed Slave School. As is doubtless known we have for some months past been finding employment for the boys here and there as opportunity presented. A few weeks ago the last one was given work at the Government Dispensary, where he has the opportunity of qualifying himself for a responsible position. We are keeping in touch with all of the boys as well as we can, and some day we expect to report upon their individual progress, but for the present at any rate we will need no more gifts for this definite object.

N. B.—The Arabian Mission depends for its support and the extension of its work, not on the treasury of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America, though under its care and administration, but upon contributions specifically made for this purpose. The churches, societies and individuals subscribing are not confined to the Reformed Church. Members of other denominations are among its supporters and its missionaries. Regular gifts and special donations are invited from all who are interested in Mission work in Arabia. Regular contributors will receive quarterly letters and annual reports, without application. All contributions, or applications for literature or information, should be sent to "THE ARABIAN MISSION," 25 East 22d Street, New York.

THE "NEGLECTED PENINSULA"

Arabia

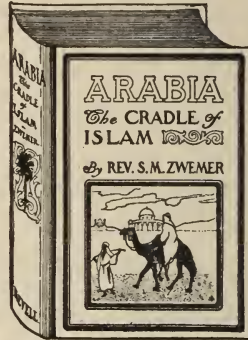
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